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AN ANALYSIS OF CHILD CARE
NEEDS IN
HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

THE
SOCIAL
PLANNING

and RESEARCH COUNCIL
of Hamilton and District

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**AN ANALYSIS OF CHILD CARE
NEEDS IN
HAMILTON-WENTWORTH**

Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District

A discussion paper presented to
the Health and Social Services Committee
Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth

By the
Child Care Advisory Committee
and SPRC Staff

September 1992






THE SOCIAL PLANNING AND RESEARCH COUNCIL
OF HAMILTON AND DISTRICT

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CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

In June, 1988, members of the Social Planning and Research Council's Community Development Advisory Committee's Sub-Committee on Day Care met to discuss some "common thread" problems inherent within the child care system in Hamilton-Wentworth. These included: under-funding of existing spaces, enrichment of additional spaces, the structure of funding, co-ordination and planning of child care services, and the lack of services in some areas of the Region.

By September, 1988, the Social Planning and Research Council's Board of Directors had approved the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1:

That the Social Planning and Research Council (SPRC) establish an Ad Hoc Child Care Advisory Committee (CCAC), the purpose of this committee being to analyze and assess information on child care needs in the Hamilton-Wentworth Region relative to funding, service availability, need, and the jurisdiction of child care/planning.

Recommendation 2:

In establishing such a committee, all activities and information would be reported to the SPRC Board of Directors to provide recommendations for policy direction in these aforementioned areas.

Ultimately, the long term goal of this committee was considered to be the development and implementation of policies emanating from a more formalized child care master plan. Given SPRC Board approval, such a plan would be promoted in virtually all areas of the child care community in Hamilton-Wentworth.

Membership on the Advisory Committee was to comprise members of the SPRC Board, members of the Community Development Advisory Committee and community representatives

from the following areas:

- Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Regional Social Services, Hamilton-Wentworth
- Regional Health and Social Services Committee
- Non-Profit and Commercial Centres
- Association of Day Care Operators
- Boards of Education
- Consumers

As an advisory group to the SPRC Board, the existing policies of the SPRC regarding child care would serve as the foundation for the committee's work.

Concurrent with the formation of this committee was a resolution from Hamilton-Wentworth Region Council, dated September, 1988, stating:

"That the Social Planning and Research Council be requested to revitalize their Day Care (Advisory) Committee to consider day care issues in the Region."

This request came as the result of a September, 1988, review of non-subsidized Regional dollars being paid to day-care operators and presented to the Regional Health and Social Services Committee for discussion. In subsequent CCAC meetings, it was agreed that this request could be met through a variety of ongoing research activities, including a comparative study of municipal child care per diems across Southern Ontario and a wage survey of day care staff across the Region.

This report has been prepared as a summary of a number of initiatives which commenced through the Child Care Advisory Committee. The committee ceased to meet in 1990.

CHAPTER II

TRENDS IN DEMAND

Between 1987 and 1991, the number of licensed day care spaces in Hamilton-Wentworth rose by 53%, from 3641 to 5556. During 1991, 22% of licensed spaces were located in commercial centres, while the remaining 78% were located in non-profit centres.

	<u>Licensed Capacity</u>	<u>No. of Facilities</u>
1987	3641	105
1988	3859	109
1989	4038	114
1990	4825	124
1991	5556	127

THE FUTURE DEMAND FOR CHILD CARE

The demand for child care is primarily affected by three factors:

- 1) The number of pre-school children in the population (Demographic).
- 2) The employment level of females with children (Female Employment).
- 3) The level of participation of parents in non-labour force activities such as education and training (Program Availability).

From a demographic perspective, the projected trends in the size of the pre-school population to 2006 will have a moderating effect on the demand for child care. The size of the 0-4 population cohort in Hamilton-Wentworth is expected to remain the same in the 1991 to 1996 period and then decline to 2006.

	<u>0-4 Population¹</u>
1991	29,100
1996	29,100
2001	26,700
2006	25,200

If the 1991 ratio of children, aged 0 to 4, to licensed day care spaces remains the same throughout the period, the following trend in spaces emerges:

1991	5,556
1996	5,556
2001	5,097
2006	4,811

The second determinant of child care demand is somewhat more difficult to predict. The dramatic increase in female labour force participation during the past three decades has been a major factor in the escalating demand for child care during that period. Female labour force participation rates are expected to continue their increase during the nineties as two incomes among young families become more and more of an economic necessity, due to the deterioration of economic circumstances with this cohort.²

This factor could, therefore, counter the effects of the demographic shift. The projection is complicated, however, by current uncertainty about the future employment trends in our Region. Continued high rates of unemployment will moderate the opportunity for labour force participation by both genders, although women have, traditionally, been more affected by economic downturns than males.³

¹Population Projections, 1988-2006. Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth, March, 1989

²Community Trends in Hamilton-Wentworth, Social Planning and Research Council, June 1989.

³An Overview of the Impact of the Recession on Women in Hamilton-Wentworth. Social Planning and Research Council, June 1985.

The third demand factor relates to the availability of training, educational and employment programs for females. Two recent local studies have highlighted the importance of the availability of child care in determining the participation of females in programs of this nature.⁴ It is anticipated that the availability of programs in these areas will increase in the future, given the priority in labour force development strategies which has been attached to training initiatives by both the Federal and Provincial Governments.⁵

In summary, the future demand for child care in the Region is difficult to predict, given the current level of uncertainty about future employment levels in the Region. Demographic influences could have a moderating effect but these influences could be counteracted by continued increases in female labour force participation and the increased availability of adult training and education opportunities. The effects of increasing female labour force participants are, in turn, dependent upon the extent and the rate of recovery from the current recession.

Given a return to economic normality in the Region, it is probable that the demand for child care will continue to increase due to continuing increases in the levels of labour force activity among females. In fact, the availability of child care could become an important determinant of economic development if projected labour shortages materialize during the latter half of this decade. The Federal Government has identified increased labour force participation by females as an important solution to projected labour shortages.⁶

In considering the future demand for child care services, it is also important to note that child care is increasingly viewed as a critical early intervention strategy for children-at-risk. Although it has traditionally been viewed, primarily, as a vehicle for increasing the access of single mothers to the labour market, it has also been recognized as a key mode of intervention for children in high-risk or disadvantaged families. Future demand will consequently be affected by the degree to which child care is utilized as a preferred mode of intervention for children in high-risk situations.

⁴An Examination of the Impact of Employment Training Programs on Social Assistance Recipients in Hamilton-Wentworth. Social Planning and Research Council, June 1989.

⁵Success in the Works. A Policy Paper. Employment and Immigration, Canada. 1990.

⁶Ibid.

CHAPTER III

FUNDING AND FINANCE ISSUES

The Social Planning and Research Council carried out research activities in three specific areas relating to the funding and financing of licensed child care in the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth. These included the following:

- 1) A comparative per-diem survey of licensed day care across specific Ontario municipalities.
- 2) An analysis of surpluses and capital funding in the local child care sector.
- 3) A survey of licensed day nurseries regarding a "standardized" costing model for operations budgeting in the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.

1) Municipal Per Diems

In terms of policies relating to per diem rates for licensed child care, the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth is comparable to a majority of Southern Ontario municipalities. In essence, the Municipality pays operators a per diem rate for each child in a day care program, less the fees, if any, paid by the parent(s) to the program. This is determined by the municipality. Additionally, the per diem rate cannot exceed the actual per diem cost, based on operating expenditures. As is the case in our Region, most municipalities base their per diem allocations on a submitted budget from each program.

Hamilton-Wentworth is consistent with many other comparable-sized Ontario municipalities in its formula of calculating per diems.

There are two formulae most often used:

- a) Paying out the actual per diem requested by each operator on the basis of the total units of care divided into the gross budget for the program;
- b) The allocation of Provincial and Regional funding overrides the per diem requests if they are higher than allocated amounts. Thus, the total cost for all spaces provided is divided by the number of service days in the fiscal year to arrive at a per diem rate.

In terms of average rate of per diem across specified licensed age categories, the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth pays out higher than the average amount allocated across Southern Ontario municipalities.

An examination of the difference between requested and approved per diem rates indicates that most municipalities, including Hamilton-Wentworth, pay out as per operators' requested and published rates. On average, most Southern Ontario municipalities which compare administratively with Hamilton-Wentworth, have held per diem rates to approximately 4% annual increases.

2) Surpluses and Capital Funding in the Child Care Sector

In January, 1990, the CCAC produced a report with recommendations which dealt specifically with the retention of surplus funds by centres and the need for greater capital expenditures within the local child care sector. The paper provided some background on the interpretation of operating surpluses (i.e., when funds have been provided in excess of actual costs) and policies of funders requiring the return of year-end surpluses.

A basic initial conclusion in favour of the retention of surpluses by non-profit organizations involves the ability of agencies to accumulate operating surpluses in a reserve fund, primarily for capital purposes, as a result of "efficiencies" in operations. This argument relates to a traditional principle of non-profit funding - the separation of operating and capital funding.

The practice of separating these two types of funding has been based on some baseline premises:

- 1) That agencies should be able to provide for some or all of their capital needs through donations, as a result of the special incentives given through the income tax system. This premise is true only for agencies which are registered charities.
- 2) The desire of funders to maintain independent control over capital and operating funds of recipient agencies. This serves to prevent inappropriate disbursement of operating funds for service delivery to items such as facilities and office equipment. It also allows funders the capability of more control over facility expansion. Thus, physical capacity does not exceed the capacity of available operating funds.

Within this practice, the paper also recognized inequities, the most prevalent of which relates to inequities between agencies which rent versus those which own their facilities. Renters can cover the cost of facility improvements under operating funds. However, owned-facility agencies must face facility improvements as a capital cost.

The current policies regarding surpluses and capital funding for licensed child care programs in the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth are not unlike funding policies for other non-profit sectors. However, it is reasonable to state that, to some extent, child care programs have historically had a "special status" among non-profits, specifically:

- a) Licensed programs have come under provisions which allow them to maintain a (7.7%) float in operating expenses from one year to the next;
- b) The Regional Municipality has expressed an historical willingness to fund a (20%) share of minor capital needs through municipal per diems.

In its report, the CCAC agreed with the current Regional policy regarding the return of surpluses, provided the calculation for "actual costs of services" is based on standardized procedures across all types of licensed programs (i.e. both non-profit and private/commercial centres).

There was a concern that the calculation of actual costs differed greatly among programs. In particular, in the treatment of premises' rental costs, some centres pay lower rates of rent when basic facility repairs/improvements are not landlord provided. Thus, the centre must pay the full cost of these necessities in the form of capital costs, which cannot be covered by operating per diems. On the contrary, other centres may pay higher rental rates, but the landlord provides for the basic repairs and improvements. Thus, the costs are borne by operating per diems since they form a part of the agency's rent.

Realizing that there exists some variation among centres in the calculation of actual costs, the CCAC also recommends that a resource person (or persons) is needed to work with local child care programs in developing a more uniform approach to this calculation. This is particularly true where it relates to the treatment of facility and other capital costs.

Lastly, the committee recognized that significant problems exist in the funding of capital requirements. Thus, a thorough review of capital funding for child care programs is necessary within the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.

3) The Need for a "Standardized" Child Care Costs Model in Hamilton-Wentworth

Early in 1991, the Social Planning and Research Council agreed to facilitate the administration and analysis of a survey of licensed day nurseries regarding the current system of individualized operations budgeting for day care operators in Hamilton-Wentworth. Three critical, open-ended questions were asked of operators:

- a) Are you satisfied with the system of individualized operators' budgeting currently in place across the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth?
- b) Would a more standardized set of expenditure guidelines, incorporating a "flat fee" structure, be an effective alternative?
- c) What are other possible alternatives to the current system which would be more effective?

The quantitative sample for this written survey was minimal. However, the content of collective responses from concerned operators was vast and most comprehensive.

a) The Current System - Some Thoughts

Responses were invited with regard to satisfaction with the current system of individualized budgeting. Those operators who agreed with the system as is, noted the complexity of trying to standardize items such as salaries, food expenditures and rental costs. This was considered the main detractor from any sort of standardized model.

Those opposed to the current system had a variety of rationales. Many felt that it is too time consuming and expensive. In other cases, operators noted the lack of flexibility to deal with budgetary concerns in cases of mid-year change or crisis was a negative point. Others felt there was too much discretionary decision-making behind variations in the rates paid out to centres.

With regard to surplus funds, still others noted that these funds were handled ineffectively to the point of not allowing for any capital expenditures on upgrading of facilities.

Operators had concerns that the current process of budget submissions is often slow, to the point of being 6 - 8 months into the budgeted fiscal year before income has actually been made available.

b) "Flat Fee" Structure Feasibility

Operators who responded to the research, had a number of insights regarding a possible "flat fee" structure for budgeting.

Those who liked the concept agreed that a standardized system would offer more fairness to both operators and clients. This group also agreed that a more equitable distribution of funding might be realized through such a model. An important criteria for successful use of such a model would need to consider the rental factor and also office equipment costs.

Those opposed to such a model noted the lack of room for the unexpected or cost variance, particularly in rental costs and property taxes. In addition, certain items, such as food, office costs and insurance, cannot necessarily be calculated into this type of budget. Others felt that if fees were standardized according to a set of minimum requirements, there would be no financial opportunity or inclination to improve on service quality.

c) Alternativess to the Current System

Many ideas were offered in terms of changing the current system of budget submission. A basic criterion recognized the need to ensure that any new costing approaches should ensure, as a premise, greater access for families to services and a fair recognition of staff value.

Suggested new approaches included the following points:

- combine a "flat fee" structure with cost additions based on individualized centre budgets;
- base expenses on a ratio according to licensed capacities;
- develop and recognize a "trust" system where the ideas of those who must currently fill out and deliver budgets should be more formally recognized;
- allow for a user fee (i.e., extra-billing) to make up the difference between parent and Region fees;
- use the "bench mark" budget formula (revised) as it was originally intended.

A number of operators expressed an interest in meeting with those interested in reviewing and discussing the present system in some type of consensus-building forum.

CONCLUSIONS

Hamilton-Wentworth is not unlike other comparable municipalities across Southern Ontario, in terms of the average dollars paid out to licensed day care programs and the way in which these per diem rates are calculated.

With regard to returning surpluses, the current Regional policy should continue to be supported. However, the procedure used in calculating the actual costs of any child care service should incorporate a more standardized costing. This should be consistent across all types of licensed programs regardless of their incorporated status.

There is a need for funding bodies to carry out a thorough review of capital funding for child care across the Region.

There is also a need for a community resource person or program to be developed, wherein local child care providers could better understand and incorporate a more uniform approach to costing and budget development.

Along the lines of a "standardized" costing model for child care funding, no consensus was evident from program providers in the community around the need for such an approach. However, in light of the research carried out pertaining to per diem rates and surplus (capital funding calculations) the need, from a municipal administrative perspective, for such a model is apparent. More emphasis may need to be directed immediately at the funder level, around the feasibility of such a model and its relative impacts on the administrative structure and decision-making capabilities of the Department of Social Services.

As a parallel consideration, there is a need to reach a better understanding of providers' needs regarding their administrative and budgeting concerns, as well as their relationship(s) with funders. In this respect, community consultation which relies on more collaborative models of information sharing and problem solving may be the most effective vehicle for planning around local funding to programs.

CHAPTER IV

HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES

In 1985, the Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario (Hamilton Branch) (AECEO) first attempted a major research project which dealt with the wages and working conditions of staff in E.C.E. programs across the Region. In particular, the concept of a "bench-mark" budgeting approach was to, theoretically, improve the salaries of E.C.E. teachers and other program staff according to a salary scale set out by the AECEO. This was to be phased in over a five-year period.

As part of its mandate, the CCAC proposed to carry out a follow-up survey of salaries and working conditions as a means of measuring any significant changes since 1985. A large (n=362) sample of respondents was collected from a broad cross-section of licensed day nurseries.

PROFILE OF A HAMILTON-WENTWORTH CHILD CARE WORKER

1) Salaries and Wages

Child care workers in licensed day nurseries across the Region work an average of 35-40 hours per week. Their wages range from \$5.40 to \$14.00 per hour, with an average base wage of \$8.73 per hour. The average base per annum salary for E.C.E. workers was \$15,327 in 1990.

In terms of Director Operating Grants for workers in non-profit programs, the range of grants varied from \$1,800 to \$5,500 per annum, with an average figure of \$3,400 per annum for salaried workers. This figure works out to between \$1.00 and \$2.25 per hour, with an average of \$1.80 per hour difference in wages.

2) Benefits

a) Extended Health Plan and Dental Plan

In the SPRC study, only 38.5% of all respondents were actually involved in an extended health plan through their workplace. Of this number, approximately 40% received partial benefits, while the remaining 60% received full benefits.

While not specified, the rather low rate of involvement in such extended plans may be indicative of the very large percentage of female workers who may already be involved in an extended health plan through their partner/spouse's place of work.

Almost the same percentage (39%) of workers paid into a dental plan, with the same breakdown in partial versus full plan involvement.

b) Pension Plan

A very low percentage of full-time workers paid into a private pension plan. Only 31% of the total sample surveyed indicated they were involved in a private pension plan. Compared to other components of the social services and education sectors, this percentage is very low.

c) Life Insurance and Long Term Disability

Again, only 40% of the sample had life insurance as an employee benefit. A similar number (41%) were part of a long-term disability package.

3) Other Employee-Related Considerations

a) Professional Development and Memberships

Just over one-third of respondents had a set number of days allocated for any kind of professional development. To a lesser extent, approximately one-fifth of those surveyed had

their professional memberships (e.g. AECEO) paid for by the employer.

b) Sick Days

Close to 85% of child care workers received paid sick days. The range for paid sick days was between one and twenty-four days per year, with the average number of paid sick days per year being 9.5 days.

c) Fee Subsidies/Waivers for Staff

Approximately 60% of those surveyed had things such as conference and workshop fees paid, either in full or in part, by their employer.

In terms of subsidized program tuition for children of staff, only 30% of respondents had their child's tuition subsidized through their work place.

CONCLUSIONS

E.C.E. workers are still at the lowest end of the continuum in terms of their salaries and wages. This is true, regardless of whether their jobs are compared to similar jobs in either the education or social service sectors.

Even with a fairly wide diversity of educational backgrounds, degree of professional training does not seem to have any impact on salary. Neither does it seem that degree of seniority (i.e., number of years working in the field or area in the same program) has any impact on salary.

It is apparently true that staff in non-profit programs make higher salaries than their private centre counterparts. However, even the impact of the Direct Operating Grant has not been sufficient to bring these salaries up to par with other comparable professional job categories.

Only 30% to 40% of the study population was involved in any type of employee benefit plan through their place of work. This percentage is low compared to the general education and/or social services workforce.

While not specified, the low rate of employee involvement in any extended health or dental plan could be indicative of the large percentage of workers who may already be involved in an extended health plan through their partner/spouse's place of work.

However, it is also possible that these employees do not have access to such benefit packages through their workplace. If it is true, and further research bears this out, the program development implications become more obvious. If programs wish to keep well-skilled employees, especially during times of economic recession, program budgets may need to reflect a greater commitment to extended benefits.

What is also worth noting is the very low (31%) percentage of program workers who are paying into a private pension plan through their employer. Again, the implications point to a need for greater attention and commitment to be made by employers in providing these benefits to their employees. This would then be reflected in the budgets which are prepared annually by each program.

CHAPTER V

THE PROVINCIAL/MUNICIPAL RELATIONSHIP

In 1990, the Report of the Provincial-Municipal Social Services Review (PMSSR) was released for discussion purposes. This review represented a comprehensive assessment of a broad-base of programs which were jointly funded by municipalities and the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services. This report recommended that the degree of municipal control over the management of child care be increased, with the Province maintaining responsibility for legislation, policy development and standards. The report also recommended that all child care services be funded on a 75-25 provincial-municipal cost-share basis. This represented a slight increase in the municipal share.

In September of 1990, the Child Care Advisory Committee provided the Health and Social Services Committee with their response to these recommendations. In general, the committee was concerned that increased municipal authority in child care would serve to augment existing inequities in access to child care among municipalities across the Province. The response noted, however, that the Province will still control the "purse strings" and that any gains in actual municipal authority may be illusory unless municipalities are willing to augment provincial allocations with 100% municipal dollars.

The current status of the PMSSR report is uncertain. Since its release, two other reports have been released by the Province which arrived at different conclusions with respect to child care.

Children First, a report of the MCSS Advisory Committee on Children's Services, recommended that all children's services, including child care, be combined under the control of local elected Children's Authorities. This report was released in November 1990.

A more recent (1991) report of the Advisory Committee to the Minister of Municipal Affairs on the Provincial-Municipal Financial Relationship, reviewed all joint provincial-municipal programs and developed a recommendation pertaining to child care which was different from that of PMSSR. Their report recommended that the Province take sole responsibility for child

care policy and funding with a shared responsibility for service delivery. The shared delivery recommendation was based upon the recommendation that child care is delivered through a variety of agencies, including non-profit and private providers.

In general, then, the report of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs has recommended that the Province take over the major responsibility for the child care policy, funding and delivery. This is in contrast to the PMSSR recommendation pertaining to an expanded role for municipalities in child care and to Children First, which recommended the establishment of a local elected authority.

The Province's current response to these issues is the establishment of a "disentanglement" committee by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, with a mandate to make recommendations pertaining to all areas of joint provincial/municipal activities.

In summary, a number of conflicting policies pertaining to the funding and administration of day care have been put forth by the Provincial Government. A clear policy direction has not yet emerged.

CHAPTER VI

CO-ORDINATION AND PLANNING

One of the key concerns of the committee was related to the establishment of a local co-ordination and planning body for child-care services in Hamilton-Wentworth. A co-ordinating body would have a broad-based mandate which incorporated information-sharing, joint-programming, advocacy and planning/priority-setting.

The development of such a body would be consistent with the evolution of service planning and co-ordination within Hamilton-Wentworth. Many service sectors have formed co-ordinating bodies of this nature and the child care sector is one of the few which has no formal mechanism for co-ordinated planning and priority-setting.⁷ The creation of such a body would also be consistent with the apparent desire of the Province to devolve more control over priority-setting and allocations to local community. (See Chapter V for a discussion of these issues).

In discussing this issue, the committee concluded that a planning committee, such as the Child Care Advisory Committee, is not the best vehicle for accomplishing this task. Given the heterogeneous nature of the child care sector and the relatively large number of individual providers, there were concerns that a committee model did not allow for the type of broad-based participation which was required.

A number of vehicles were identified which could be utilized to broaden the base of participation - surveys, workshops, consultation conferences.

It was also noted that there was a need to better co-ordinate child care services with other components of the children's services system. Given the importance of this issue, it was suggested that the role of the Association of Agencies for Treatment and Development (AATD) be explored with respect to the planning of child care services.

⁷A Co-ordinated Planning and Priorities Model for Community Services in Hamilton-Wentworth. A Report of the Community Services Planning Group. Social Planning and Research Council, October, 1989.

The committee also examined the model of a funded "umbrella" organization for child care services such as the Umbrella Day Care Service in Toronto.

Given the variety of potential vehicles which are available for the co-ordination of child care services, the committee recommended that a broad-based consultation process be initiated which would involve service providers and consumers in the identification of the appropriate model for Hamilton-Wentworth.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

The demand for child care in the near future will be largely determined by the rate of economic recovery in the Region, as well as the availability of Provincial/Federal training programs. The growing interest in day care as an early intervention strategy for children-at-risk could also play a critical role in determining future patterns of demand. Although the number of pre-school children in Hamilton-Wentworth will decline between 1996 and 2006, the factors mentioned above could continue to increase the demand for day care in our Region.

With respect to the funding of day care, Hamilton-Wentworth is similar to other Regional Municipalities in terms of average dollars paid out and the calculation of per diems. The current practice of surplus returns should be continued in our Region.

Concerns have been identified with respect to the need for a thorough review of capital funding for child care centres and the need for a standardized approach to the costing of services which adequately reflects the true needs of providers.

There was no consensus among providers about the desirability of a "flat-fee" approach to the allocation of funds.

From a human resource perspective, the salary survey confirmed that E.C.E. workers are at the low-end of the earnings continuum with respect to salaries and benefits. Salary levels were not related, to any great degree, to the education or experience of ECE workers.

Provincial initiatives pertaining to the cost-sharing and administrative arrangements for child care have been contradictory and there has been no clear policy initiative forthcoming, despite a variety of reports on the provincial/municipal relationship. The Child Care Advisory Committee expressed concerns about a complete devolution of responsibility to municipalities on the basis of considerations of equity-of-access across the Province.

A number of the issues raised in this report reinforce the need for improved co-ordination within the day care sector. Given the heterogeneity of the sector and the large number of individual providers involved, there were concerns about the effectiveness of a single

committee in meeting the challenge of greater co-ordination. It was also recognized that there was a need to better co-ordinate the activities of the day care sector with other components of the children's services system. It has, therefore, been suggested that the role of the Association of Agencies for Treatment and Development be reviewed with respect to the planning of day care services.

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